DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 369 PS 019 496

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TITLE School Plus Home = Student Success.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Childrens Art; *Dropouts; Elementary Secondary Education; *Family School Relationship; Guidelines; *Identification; Parent Responsibility; School Responsibility; Teacher Responsibility

ABSTRACT

This handbook was developed to serve as a point of reference in identifying potential dropout problems. Included are several crucial recommendations for establishing an effective partnership between home and school that will help children succeed in school. Recommendations focus on preventive action in the classroom and at home. Artwork and slogans by third grade students supplement the text. (RH)

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School

Plus

Home

= Student Success

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SCHOOL + HOME = STUDENT SUCCESS

BY

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SPRING 1988

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The encouragement and support of Mr. Earl J. Bullock, Principal of Miller Elementary School, San Antonio I.S.D., is gratefully acknowledged. Sincere appreciation is also extended to Mrs. Mary Esther Bernal, Bilingual Director, and Mrs. Gloria Charbonneau, Supervisor, for their assistance in reviewing the original manuscript.

Target '90/Goals for San Antonio sponsored funding of the printing costs of this handbook.

FOREWARD

This handbook was developed to serve as a point of reference in identifying potential dropout problems. Included are several crucial recommendations for establishing an effective home/school partnership which will be beneficial for helping children succeed in school.

SCHOOL + HOME = STUDENT SUCCESS

Few people would dispute the fact that education begins in the home. Schooling is a continuous lifelong process which begins at birth. At the turn of the 20th Century, many of the trades in American society were handed down from father to son. Few people went to professional schools. Most of the education process was, therefore, in the hands of the parents. However, in the 1980s, there exists a need for an effective home/school partnership in order to educate America's children. To develop students to their fullest potential, this relationship must be nurtured and expanded.

The first step towards effectively addressing the dropout situation is to understand that a significant dropout problem exists. Furthermore, it is necessary to recognize that a decrease in the dropout rate is not likely to occur during the next few years due to current legislation which increases scholastic graduation requirements. The higher requirements will add to the educational dilemma, since more students are likely to experience academic failure and leave school before graduation.

Statistics included in a report prepared by Byron Kunisawa indicated that the national dropout rates for Hispanics is 39.9% and 24.7% for Blacks. However, Kunisawa further reported that these "national figures do not hint at the severe local dropout rates that in

some areas are as high as 78% for Hispanics."[1]

A GAO Report to Congress stated that among the reasons commonly expressed by dropouts for leaving school were the following: (1) low school grades, (2) conflicts with teachers, (3) friends dropped out, (4) lack of interest in school, and (5) a need or desire to work.[2] Most adolescents are limited with regard to their worldly experience. They are, therefore, unaware of the responsibilities that accompany "being on one's own." Since most of their basic needs will continue

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[1]Byron Kunisawa, "A Nation in Crisis: The Dropout Dilemma," National Education Association (January 1988): 62.

[2]U.S., Congress, House, General Accounting Office, School Dropouts: The Extent and Nature of the Problem. HRD-86-106BR, June 1986, pp. 13, 14.

to be met by their parents, the decision to drop out of school is one that is usually an easy one for many teenagers to make. The latest research studies indicate that a display of the following characteristics by a student may signal a potential dropout problem:

* frequent school absences
* lack of interest in school
* low aspirations
* poor basic academic skills
* below average reading ability
* poor grasp of mathematical concepts
* failure at one or more grade levels
* low self-esteem
* disruptive classroom behavior
* little or no participation in extracurricular activities.

In order to begin to systematically combat the root of the dropout problem,

the educational system must start during the students' initial school years. School district administrators must be willing to review school policies and curriculum to make the required changes which will keep students in school. Principals, counselors, classroom teachers and parents must recognize the severity of the problem. They must also recognize the responsibility that they share in the improvement of the educational system. The following suggestions are presented to help accomplish this goal.

AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL

1. Set up or expand remediation/ tutorial programs.

2. Modify the school curriculum as necessary to meet the educational needs of the students in your particular school.
3. Provide individual and small group counseling sessions.
4. Enforce strict attendance policies.
5. Make sure that district goals and objectives are clear to all school personnel.

IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Foster positive attitudes toward school.
2. Provide a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
3. Work to improve student-teacher interaction.
4. Individualize instruction as much as possible.

5. Provide instruction which is compatible with different learning styles.
6. Focus on teaching basic reading skills.
7. Teach coping/survival skills.
8. Help students set high expectations.
9. Be supportive.
10. Help raise students' self-esteem.
11. Make every student feel successful.
12. Remember that children come from diverse background.
13. Form a partnership with the students' parents.

IN THE HOME

1. Make sure your children attend school every day.

2. Emphasize the importance of obtaining a good education.
3. Set aside a scheduled "home-work time."
4. Help develop your children's basic skills on a daily basis.
5. Show interest in your children's studies.
6. Participate in school-related activities.
7. Take your children to the library on a regular basis.
8. Show pride in your children's efforts to succeed in school.
9. Limit television viewing time.
10. Maintain an open line of communication with your children.
11. Avoid forcing personal ambitions on your children.
12. Help your children feel successful!

Educators and parents must be willing to make the sacrifices needed to ensure that every possible option is explored in an effort to make students **want** to stay in school. To date, the correct formula for solving the dropout problem has evaded American society. Establishing a strong home/school partnership is a necessary step if we are to firmly hold a solution in our grasp in the near future.

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"STAY IN SCHOOL"

ARTWORK/SLOGANS BY
THIRD GRADE STUDENTS:

GABRIELA ALFARO

EDDIE BANKSTON

GUILLERMO LÒPEZ

JUAN LÒPEZ

MARÌA PANIAGUA

RENEE RANSON

JADA SMITH

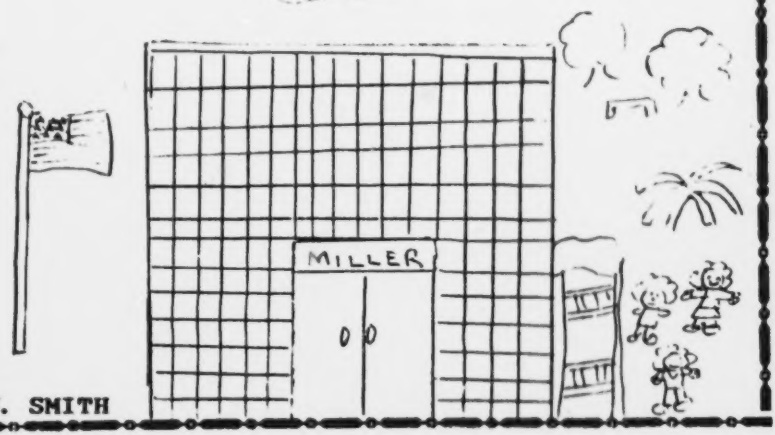
DORIE MILLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SAN ANTONIO I.S.D.

SHOOT FOR THE STARS,
AND YOU WILL GO FAR:
SO STAY IN SCHOOL,
AND YOU WILL BE COOL.

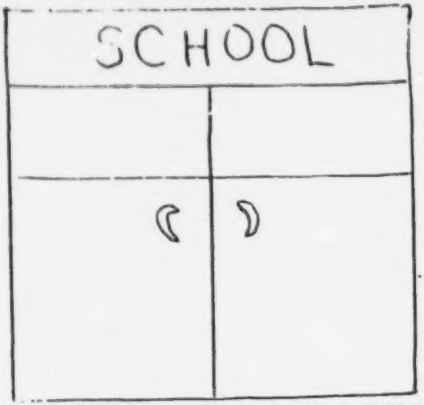
R. RANSON

SCHOOL IS FUN.
I SEE KIDS HAPPILY RUN.
THEY PLAY ON THE MONKEY BARS,
AND SHOOT FOR THE BRIGHT STARS.



J. SMITH

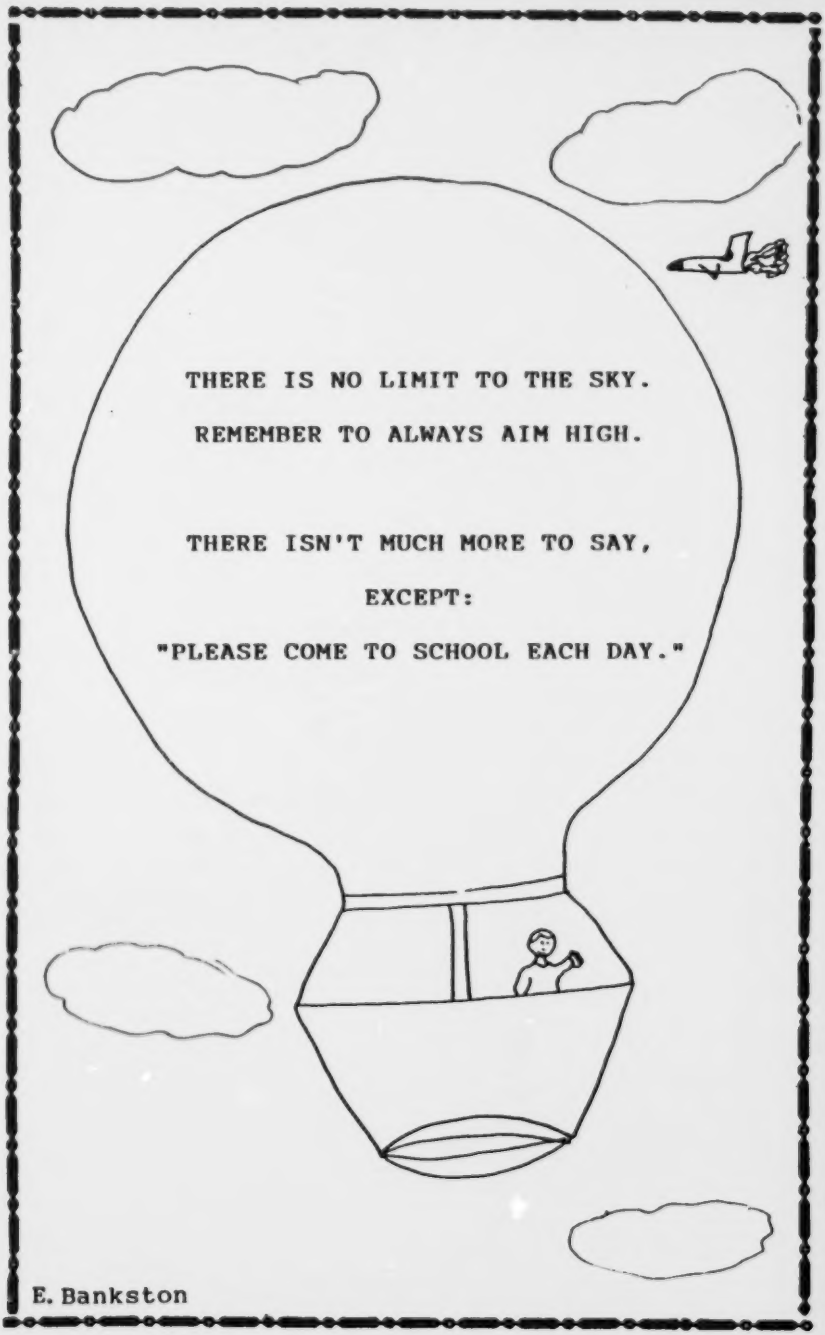
OPEN THE DOORS OF KNOWLEDGE . . .

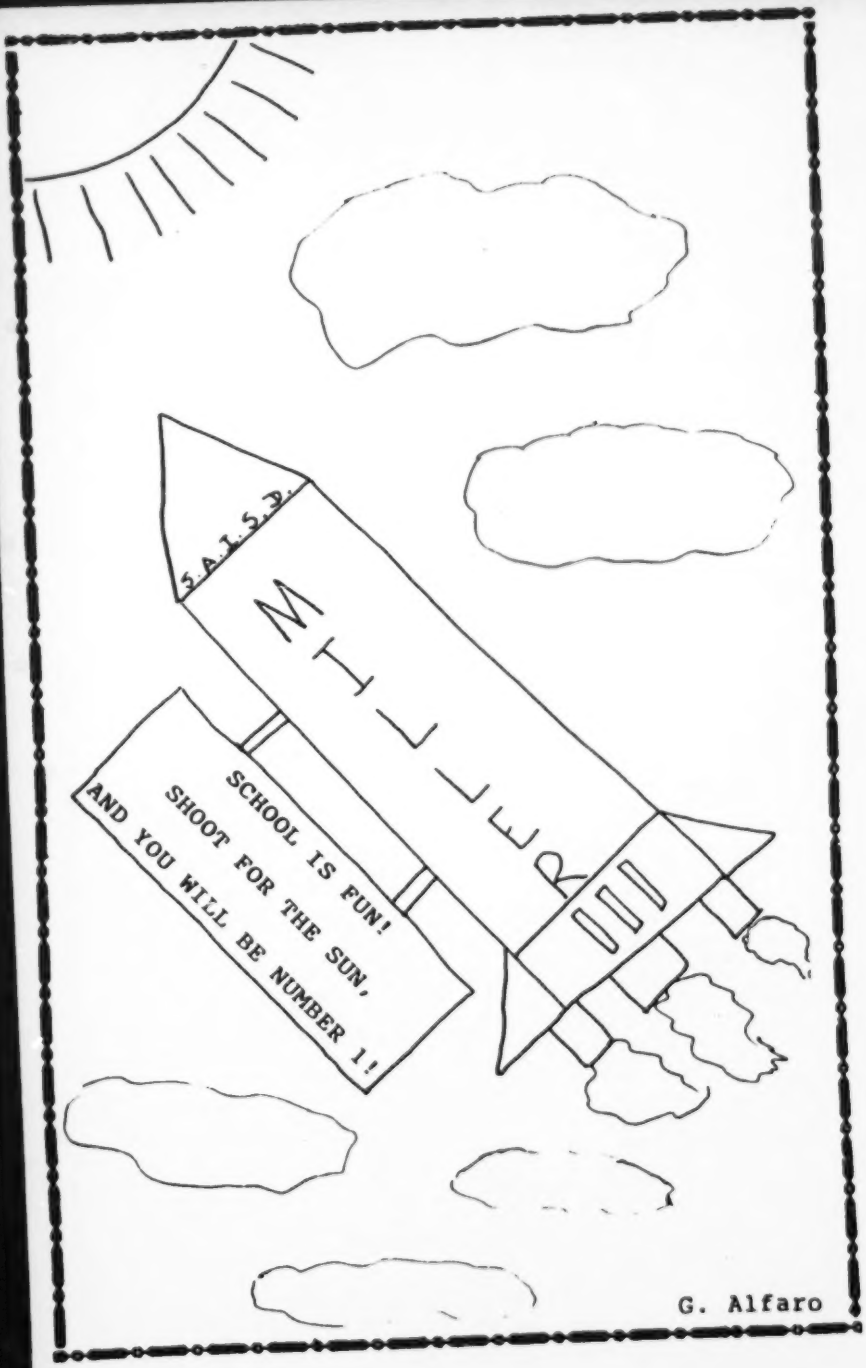


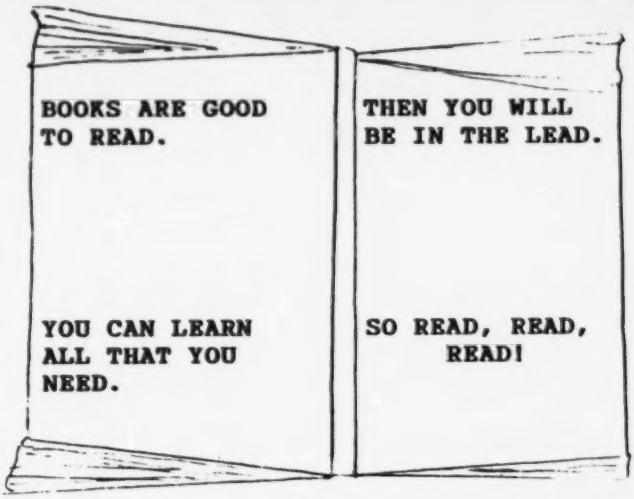
. . . AND YOU MAY GO TO COLLEGE!

G. Lòpez

E. Bankston

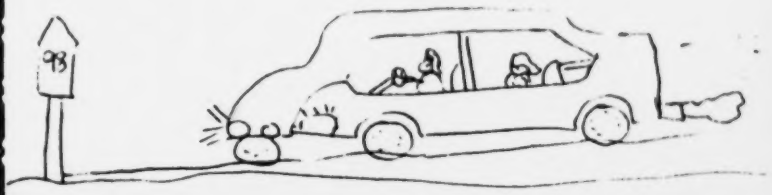

THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE SKY.
REMEMBER TO ALWAYS AIM HIGH.
THERE ISN'T MUCH MORE TO SAY,
EXCEPT:
"PLEASE COME TO SCHOOL EACH DAY."
E. Bankston


S.A.I.S.P.
SCHOOL IS FUN!
SHOOT FOR THE SUN,
AND YOU WILL BE NUMBER 1!
G. Alfaro



M. PANIAGUA G. ALFARO

ZOOM YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS!
DON'T STOP UNTIL YOU KNOW
YOU'VE DONE YOUR BEST!



J. LÒPEZ